



July 2, 2020

SENT VIA E-MAIL

Honorable Frank LaRose
Ohio Secretary of State
22 N. 4th Street, 16th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Secretary LaRose,

The ACLU of Ohio commends the foresight you have shown in light of the creation of the Ready for November Task Force (Task Force) on June 1, 2020. Election preparedness cannot be underestimated for the upcoming general election as Ohio, and the nation at large, is still in the grips of the novel coronavirus pandemic. The Task Force has provided valuable updates on election reform proposals being considered by the General Assembly and has been a helpful space for local Boards of Election officials to discuss best practices. However, the lack of participation by voting rights groups and other advocates on the Task Force is deeply concerning.

To date, the June 9th meeting of the Task Force is the lone meeting where voting advocates have been able to participate, and though we appreciate our one-time inclusion, the ACLU of Ohio believes it is in the best interest of Ohio voters for pro-democracy groups to have a constant presence on the Task Force. Whether discussing the possible closing of polling locations, allowing for additional secure absentee ballot drop-boxes, or modifying postmark requirements for mail-in ballots, we believe giving the voting rights community a seat at the table will help safeguard the level of ballot access Ohioans expect, and frankly, deserve.

Moving forward, we strongly encourage the Task Force to invite representatives of voting rights, disability access, re-entry, and Black and minority led organizations to participate in the Task Force's weekly meetings. Including these voices in the critical discussions of the Task Force will help promote robust ballot access and enhance our democratic process. As you have noted on several occasions, election integrity is the cornerstone of a functioning democracy, and one of the best ways to give the people of Ohio confidence in their elections is to have an inclusive conversation on election administration. Your office has the sole discretion to welcome the voting rights community to the Task Force, or continue to keep us on the sidelines. We implore you to choose the former.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Daniels".

Gary Daniels
Chief Lobbyist
ACLU of Ohio
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